



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Agriculture Director Etchepare to retire**

**CHEYENNE** (January 27, 2009) – John Etchepare, who has devoted six years to the Wyoming Department of Agriculture and his entire career to the Agriculture industry, plans to retire as the state agency's director at the end of April 2009.

Before serving as director of agriculture under Governor Dave Freudenthal, Etchepare owned and managed Warren Live Stock Company for 37 years. Raising sheep, cattle and wheat on extensive land holdings in Wyoming and Colorado, the Warren Live Stock Company was one of the largest family-owned operations in the Rocky Mountain region when it was sold in 2000. During Etchepare's long career in Agriculture, he served as the President of the Wyoming Wool Growers and Director of the American Sheep Industry while being active in the National Cattlemen's Association, the Wyoming Stock Growers and the National Lamb Feeders Association.

Along with his position as director of the WDA, Etchepare has served on other state entities during his time as a producer. These include the Economic Development Board, the State Land Committee and the Brand Inspection Task Force. As WDA Director, Etchepare served as the Executive Officer for the Wyoming Board of Agriculture, a member of the Wyoming Agriculture and Natural Resource Mediation Board, co-chair of the Animal Damage Management Board, member of the Environmental Pesticide Control Act of 1973 Board of Certification, Chairman of the Carbon Sequestration Board, Ex-officio member of both the Wyoming Beef Council and the Wyoming Wheat Marketing Commission as well as Chairman of the Wyoming Landscape Conservation Initiative.

"During his career as a rancher and time as Department of Agriculture Director, John has been a tireless advocate for the farming and ranching community of Wyoming," said Jason Fearneyhough, Deputy Director of the Wyoming Department of Agriculture. "He has driven many significant successes at the WDA and his experience, expertise and position as director will be missed by not only by our department but the Wyoming agriculture community as a whole."

The governor has not yet announced who will replace Etchepare as the agency's interim or permanent director once his retirement is effective on April 30, 2009.

"I have very much enjoyed serving the state of Wyoming as the Agriculture Director for the last six years." Etchepare said. "Agriculture has always been my passion and it was an honor to serve the citizens of Wyoming by celebrating, maintaining and fighting for such an important part of Wyoming's heritage and future."

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